



International Solidarity Reflection

School Sisters of Notre Dame

Shalom

Migration and forced displacement

January 2019

Introduction

"I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger, and you welcomed me." (Matthew 25:35)

"Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age (Matthew 25:35-43). The Lord entrusts to the Church's motherly love every person forced to leave their homeland in search of a better future. This solidarity must be concretely expressed at every stage of the migratory experience – from departure through journey to arrival and return. This is a great responsibility, which the Church intends to share with all believers and men and women of good will, who are called to respond to the many challenges of contemporary migration with generosity, promptness, wisdom and foresight, each according to their own abilities."

("Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees," Message of Pope Francis for 104th Word Day of Migrants and Refugees, January 14, 2018)

Call to prayer

Jesus was also a migrant. Jesus was born outside the city "because there was no place for them in the inn" (Luke 2, 7). The early childhood of Jesus includes the experience of the forced migration of the Holy Family. He spent his early years in a foreign land. (Matthew 2,14-15).

May we see Jesus in the suffering humanity of our time, those forced to flee oppressive regimes and those whose land no longer provides the sustenance they need. Let us be grateful that Jesus "dwelled among us" to show us the way. (John 1:11-14).

Experience

Migration around the world: According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs *International Migration Report* 2017, in 2017 the number of migrants reached the figure of 258 million, compared to 248 million in 2015.

- Migrant women constituted 48% of these.
- Approximately, Asia receives 31% of the population of international migrants, Europe 30%, the Americas 26%, Africa 10% and Oceania 3%.

Migration from Honduras: I share with you the pain of experiencing the massive EXODUS of thousands of Hondurans for more than a month. They are fleeing the unbearable conditions of life in our country. We have seen children, women, young people, men, in short, whole families, desperately wanting to save their lives.

The alarming reasons for the displacement of our peoples include war, violence, extreme economic inequality, corruption, impunity, lack of opportunities (employment, health, education, housing etc.). Either they fear for their future or they just do not see a future.

Reflection

We are aware that in most places where there are School Sisters of Notre Dame, there are migrants. It is an urgent global concern. The Directional Statement of our 24th General Chapter commits us to “discern as a congregation which urgent and critical global concerns we are called to address and [to] dare to respond boldly in unsuspected ways (*You Are Sent C.17; DG 36-38*).”

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes for the first time the contribution of migration to sustainable development. Eleven of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals contain goals and indicators that are relevant to migration or displacement. The basic principle of the "do not leave anyone behind" agenda includes migrants.

Action

- How is my personal / community / ministerial life affected by this global migratory reality?
- What are we called to do at this time?

Closing Prayer

Prepare us, Lord, to throw ourselves into the impossible, because hidden in the impossible is your grace and your presence. We cannot fall into a vacuum. The future is an enigma; our path takes us into a fog; but we desire to continue giving of ourselves, because You are waiting in the darkness, with a thousand human eyes overflowing with tears. Amen.



*Flight into Egypt; Artist: Gentile da Fabriano, 1423. Source: Wikimedia Commons
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